



November 2, 2009

## **Dr. Willem Adriaan Viljoen disciplined by College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta**

Following a thorough investigation and subsequent disciplinary hearing, the Council of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) has found Calgary family physician Dr. Willem Viljoen demonstrated unbecoming conduct. As a result, Dr. Viljoen was suspended and asked to pay the costs of the College's investigation.

### **Background:**

In October 2007, the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) was notified by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia (CPSBC) that Dr. Viljoen was providing cosmetic medical services in British Columbia when he was not a member of that College.

In November 2007, Dr. Viljoen was notified by the CPSBC that he must immediately stop providing medical services in British Columbia. That same month, the CPSA wrote to Dr. Viljoen to advise he must not provide any medical services in British Columbia until he is registered by the CPSBC.

In March 2008, the CPSBC lodged a complaint to the CPSA alleging that Dr. Viljoen continued to provide medical services in British Columbia after he was advised not to do so.

The CPSA conducted an investigation and charged Dr. Viljoen with disregarding the direction of the Registrar. On September 15, 2009, College Council found Dr. Viljoen guilty of unbecoming conduct. They directed Dr. Viljoen be suspended for five days, pay the costs of the investigation (\$13,573.26) and have his name published.

In exchange for Dr. Viljoen's cooperation, which included admitting to the charges and thereby avoiding a lengthy hearing, the College accepted Dr. Viljoen's recent voluntary provision of medical services to impoverished areas of Ghana, Africa as fulfillment of his five days of suspension.

The following disciplinary judgment will be published in the November 2009 edition of the CPSA newsletter, *The Messenger*, and posted on the College website.

### **Dr. Willem Adriaan Viljoen**

On September 15, 2009, the Council of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta found that Dr. Willem Adriaan Viljoen of Calgary, Alberta demonstrated unbecoming conduct in that he did:

- disregard the directions of the Registrar of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta given to him by letter dated November 5, 2007, and in particular, the Registrar directed him not to provide cosmetic services, including Botox injections, to patients in British Columbia until he was first registered with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia;

The Council of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta ordered that:

- Dr. Viljoen's registration with the College shall be subject to a suspension of five days, of which Dr. Viljoen shall be considered to have served the full period of suspension in consideration of his voluntary provision of medical services to the impoverished areas in Ghana, Africa;
- Dr. Viljoen shall be responsible for the costs of the investigation, the attendance before the Investigating Committee and the attendance before Council in the amount of \$13,573.26;
- The name of Dr. Viljoen, and the particulars of the matter, shall be published.

Costs are due by December 2, 2009.

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### **How the CPSA handles physician-related complaints**

Under the *Medical Profession Act*, the CPSA is responsible for reviewing and resolving physician-related complaints. In most complaint situations, the CPSA favours an educational and remedial approach and focuses on quality improvement. However, there are instances where informal resolution is not possible. These include:

- serious ethical violations,
- fraud,
- physicians who do not respond to informal resolution mechanisms, and
- physicians who refuse to participate in regulatory processes.

Based on provincial legislation, information about physician-related complaints cannot be made public. However, when a complaint results in a disciplinary hearing, the physician's name may be published if College Council determines the information to be in the public's interest.

*The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta licenses physicians, develops and administers standards of practice and conduct, and investigates/resolves physician-related complaints. We also provide leadership and direction on health and related policy issues such as access to services, quality improvement, patient safety and privacy.*

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